

Message Text

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11

ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 SS-20 NSC-07 SP-03 CIAE-00

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R 172112Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3868

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO COMMANDANT MARINE CORPS WASHDC

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USCINCSO

NAVCOMSTA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CARACAS 4481

NAVCOMSTA FOR RADM RAMAGE AND COMMODORE MERRELL

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MOPS VE US RQ

SUBJECT: JOINT US-VENEZUELAN AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS OFF
PUERTO RICO 12-15 MAY 1974

1. I RETURNED 15 MAY FROM PARTICIPATING AS AN OBSERVER IN
"VENUS III," A COMBINED AMPHIBIOUS LANDING OPERATION
UNDERTAKEN BY PHIBRON TWO IN JOINT OPERATIONS WITH THE
VENEZUELAN MARINE BATTALION EMBARKED IN LST AMAZONAS WITH
SUPPORT FROM DDS NUEVA ESPARTA AND FALCON AND SS TIBURON IN
ADDITION TO A SQUADRON OF FOUR US-MADE OV-10'S OF THE
VENEZUELAN AIR FORCE.

2. I AM PLEASED TO REPORT TO ALL HANDS THAT THE OPERATION
FROM MY POINT OF VIEW, WHICH IS NECESSARILY DIPLOMATIC, WAS
A COMPLETE SUCCESS. THE VENEZUELAN MARINES DEPORTED THEM-
SELVES WITH SKILL AND ENERGY AND FITTED IN WELL TO MY
CONCEPT OF AN EVENTUAL BINATIONAL OR MULTINATIONAL CARIBBEAN
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DEFENSE COMMAND WHICH WOULD INVOLVE HOLDING BEACHHEADS

WITH FRIENDLY FORCES OTHER THAN, OR IN ADDITION TO, OUR OWN.

3. ALTHOUGH, AS CNO KNOWS, VENEZUELAN NAVY PUT UP A LAMENTABLE PERFORMANCE IN ITS LAST UNITAS PARTICIPATION, ON THIS OCCASION THEY WERE ON THE MARK AND EVEN THOUGH AMAZONAS HAD CASUALTIES SUCH AS A LOST STERN ANCHOR AND A FOULED CABLE AROUND THE SCREWS, THEY DID MANAGE, BY WORKING OVERNIGHT AND (MIRABILE DICTU) THE ALL-NIGHT PARTICIPATION OF THE CO AND HIS CHIEF ENGINEER, TO REPAIR THE DAMAGE WITH THE ABLE ASSISTANCE OF OUR UDT'S FROM PHIBRON TWO. THE DEPLOYMENT FROM AMAZONAS ON 13 MAY WAS IMPECCABLE DESPITE HER PREVIOUS CASUALTY; AND THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT UNDER THE COMMAND OF LT. COL. LANZ, THE VENEZUELAN MARINES MEASURED UP FAIRLY CLOSE TO OUR OWN STANDARD OF PERFORMANCE.

4. THE FACT THAT WE HAD ON BOARD THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE VENEZUELAN ARMY, BG BERECIARTU, IN ADDITION TO THE CHIEF OF THE MARINE CORPS, RADM RIERA, AND THE CHIEF OF THE VENEZUELAN AIR COMBAT COMMAND, GENERAL LEON, EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE TO WHICH THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY COMMAND ATTACHED THIS JOINT OPERATION. THESE THREE COMMANDERS LEFT WITH A FEELING OF HIGH ESTEEM FOR THE MILITARY PROFICIENCY OF THE US FORCES INVOLVED AND WITH A NEW AND RATHER SURPRISED PRIDE IN THE MANNER IN WHICH THEIR OWN FORCES HAD COME UP TO THE MARK.

5. TO ALL ADDRESSEES, MAY I SAY, "WELL DONE."
MCCLINTOCK

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